

# MPSPride Monthly

Bennet Academy Edition

January 2016

## A Special Announcement

Dear Bennet Academy Community,

The beginning of a new year is exciting and a wonderful time to set new goals and make positive changes. We encourage everyone to do such things and wish you excellent health and lots of happiness and success in 2016.

Among our goals here at Bennet is to ensure that all of our students have good attendance, because being in school regularly is critical as we strive to help our children get the most out of their abilities and pursue dreams. Which brings us to our new incentive program.

We will be periodically recognizing students who are in school 95 percent of the time or more. The first recognition will take place after the 100th day of this school year -- which will be Feb. 3 (unless we have snow days).

The back of this newsletter has specifics about how this program will work. And just to be clear: We know that

THE MORE-IMPORTANT-THAN-YOU-MIGHT-THINK

# BENNET

## ATTENDANCE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

# I'm Here!

Congrats!

Way To Go!

Good Job!



For details about this program, please turn to the back page

students often miss school for legitimate reasons -- for example, illnesses. We certainly don't want children to come to school when they are sick, and on those days we ask that you call the office by 9 a.m. and also send in a note with your child when she or he returns.

We also encourage you to contact the school if there are issues we can address -- such as if your child is anxious about school, and that is affecting attendance.

Parents and guardians, you

play a critical role in getting your child up and off to school on time each day. We look forward to continue working together as we strive to give all Bennet children every opportunity to leave our school system as a lifelong learner and contributing member of society.

Thanks and Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Joseph Chella  
Principal

Matt Geary  
Superintendent

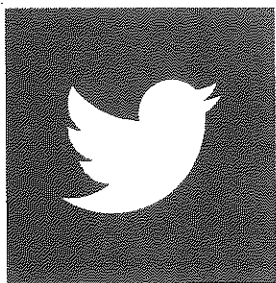
### 'Humans of MPS'

Bennet teacher Sam Ortiz is one of more than 80 people in our gallery so far. See them all at [www.MPS Pride.org](http://www.MPS Pride.org).

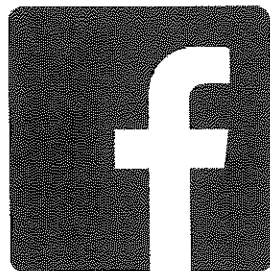


### Get Connected

For the new year, increased emphasis on digital communications. See page 2.



**Twitter:**  
**@MPS\_Pride**



**Facebook:**  
**MPS Pride**

## Get Connected!

People are increasingly relying on smartphones and other mobile devices to get information, so as a new year dawns we are re-doubling our commitment to sharing news on the district's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

We are now Tweeting/posting daily — with links to stories about school news and special events, with the next day's lunch menu, with a daily weather drawing (done by an MPS student) that includes a link to the weather forecast, even to the new 'Human of MPS' who is added to our gallery that day. This content will also, in time, be linked to our new district app (see story at right).

If you are not into social media, don't fret. We will still be sending notes and newsletters like this one home, and there's lots of information on the school and district websites.

So please, follow us on Twitter, like us on Facebook, and tell your friends!

## Coming Soon: A District App

Coming later this year -- a Manchester Public Schools mobile app that will allow you to check grades, receive school-closing notices, get alerts when lunch balances are low, and lots more ... all from your phone or mobile device.

Other features include the ability for parents/guardians to receive alerts when their child's grades drop. It can also be used to send in questions to school personnel.

The app will provide yet another way to stay connected. Stayed tuned for more!

## Attendance Incentive Program Information

We will be periodically recognizing students who are in school 95 percent of the time or more — which qualifies as 'regular school attendance' according to national attendance standards. The first recognition will take place after the 100th day of this school year -- tentatively Feb. 3.

Any student who has five or fewer absences at that point in the year will receive a special certificate that includes this important reminder:

*Good attendance helps students succeed in school and bolsters their self-esteem. Considered as a group, students who attend school 95 percent of the time or more read above grade level, get higher SAT scores, and enjoy other benefits that raise the likelihood of success in school and all that comes with that.*

We have other rewards and incentives planned and will share them later. In the meantime, to call more attention to this critical area, we are featuring throughout January a random selection of students with a solid attendance history in our 'Humans of Manchester Public Schools' gallery.

Incidentally, we will also offer recognition after 140 and 180 school days (tentatively, on April 4 and June 7). Students will again receive certificates and further recognition if they:

- ♦ Are at or above the 95 percentage attendance rate for the year.
- ♦ Missed no more than two days in the previous 40-day period.
- ♦ Improved their attendance rate during the previous 40-day period.
- ♦ Or, at the principal's discretion, made commendable efforts to attend school, despite daunting obstacles.

We encourage you to discuss this incentive program with your child and to continue to work with us as we strive to give all Bennet children every opportunity to leave our school system as lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

